

All interested parties are invited to attend an organizational meeting of the Chicot Aquifer Stakeholders (CASH) Group on Wednesday, July 28, 2004 starting at 7PM. The meeting will be held in Lafayette at the Clifton Chenier Center, located at 220 West Willow Street, Building C.

This group is being established within the guidelines of legislation recently passed by the state legislature. Act 49 of the 2003 Regular Legislative Session created the Louisiana Ground Water Resources Commission, and charged that Commission with management of the state's ground water resources. It considers quantity and quality of ground water, sustainability, encourages conservation and the economic value of water to Louisiana's citizens. Effective management and planning for beneficial uses, protection and preservation of the state's resources is a matter of public interest. Act 49 also allowed the Commission to create up to five regional stakeholder groups based on the general location of major aquifers in Louisiana. We have previously requested recognition of CASH by the Commission, at the Commission's June 23, 2004 meeting, as one of those five stakeholder groups.

We envision that this group would discuss items or issues that are known to be impacting the quality or quantity of water from the Chicot Aquifer, or is issues relating to sustainability of the aquifer. In this regard, we would be able to support the Commission in its charge to protect and preserve the ground water resources of this state.

This invitation is being extended to groups or individuals represented on the Commission and/or the Advisory Task Force as well as other parties or groups and that have an interest in the Chicot Aquifer. A tentative agenda is attached, as well as a map to the meeting location.

We look forward to meeting with your agency, and we look forward to your agency's active participation in this stakeholder group.

Sincerely,

Tim Duex, PhD
UL Lafayette
Geology Department

Don Broussard, PE
Water Operations Manager
Lafayette Utilities System

Agenda
Chicot Aquifer Stakeholders (CASH) Group
Organizational Meeting

July 28, 2004
Clifton Chenier Center, Building C
Lafayette, LA

- I. Welcoming Remarks – Don Broussard**
- II. Introductions**
- III. History of Water Planning – Dr. Bruce Darling**
- IV. Louisiana Water Law – Brent Sonnier**
- V. History of CASH – Don Broussard**
- VI. CASH Vision – Dr. Tim Duex**
- VII. Discuss Formalizing Organization via Charter or By-laws**
 - a. Sparta Commission as potential model
 - b. Discuss “membership” and funding
- VIII. Summarize Assignments and Schedule Next Meeting**
- IX. Adjourn**

Chicot Aquifer Stakeholders (CASH) Group

July 28, 2004 by Don Broussard

I would like to thank you and welcome you to this organizational meeting of Chicot Aquifer stakeholders. Your presence here means that you have an interest in the management of Louisiana's ground water resources, and in particular, those of the Chicot Aquifer. I have met many of you at meetings during the formation of the state water management plan, or at Advisory Task Force meetings or maybe at Commission meetings. If I haven't met you yet, I would like to make an opportunity tonight.

We recognize that groundwater management is a serious issue that demands our attention. Water of a certain quality and/or a certain quantity is needed by all of the entities or individuals represented here, and water that does not meet that quality standard or is not available compromises the product or the process. What we are trying to establish here is a group of interested parties who meet to discuss common issues relating to water supply issues, like availability and sustainability, quality degradation, subsidence and related topics.

The idea of a stakeholder group only works if the stakeholders recognize a value to themselves or to their organization. I think we all recognize the value of speaking with one voice. If we can discuss one issue and make a consensus recommendation to the Commission or to the legislature, the recommendation is more likely to be well received if that recommendation is presented as a recommendation of the Chicot Aquifer Stakeholders Group as opposed to a group representing only a segment of those stakeholders. I would like to establish this group as a credible resource to the public bodies charged with ground water management in Louisiana.

Now, I would be naïve to think that there aren't some issues where positions are pretty firm in one stakeholder group, but at least, by having regular meetings with each other, we could head off some bad relationships between competing stakeholder groups.

What it is

A group of water users whose source of supply is the Chicot Aquifer who meet at least once every calendar quarter to support and advise the Louisiana Ground Water Resources Commission (Commission) to proactively protect and preserve Louisiana's ground water resources. We will, of course, respond to the Commission's requests, but we need to anticipate what the Commission expects of us as a stakeholder body. Again, we want to establish our group as a credible resource to the public bodies charged with ground water management in Louisiana. CASH will do this by (in no particular order):

1. Discussing pertinent issues impacting (or expected to impact) Chicot Aquifer stakeholders, and recommending appropriate policies and practices to the Commission for action, implementation and enforcement. CASH will establish a connection/liaison between the Commission, the Advisory Task Force and the legislature.

2. Assessing current state of knowledge about the Chicot Aquifer, locally, regionally and holistically, and identifying and closing data and knowledge gaps. This includes identifying potential funding sources, such as grants, to support research important in ground water management
3. Assist in the development of a practical drought management plan
4. Assist in the development of a land management plan in areas identified as Chicot Aquifer recharge areas
5. Providing mutual aid
6. Collecting reference material and offering it for use to interested parties; providing public education and training
7. Coordinating activities with the state legislature, the Commission and Advisory Task Force and with state agencies

What it isn't

“Chicken Little” management

A subset of the Commission or of the Louisiana Ground Water Advisory Task Force

A “public body” subject to open meeting rules

A taxing body

A regulating or registering or permitting body

Water well inspectors or water policemen

Water rights administrators

In conclusion, we can define ourselves however we want. I think we should focus on being a credible resource, anticipate needs of the Commission and making consensus recommendations to the public agencies to whom we report.

Here's Dr. Bruce Darling, who will discuss the Water Management Planning.

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CASH History

Dr. Duex and I made a brief presentation at the Commission's June 23, 2004 meeting, during which we asked to be recognized as one of the five stakeholder groups authorized in Act 49. A copy of the letter hand-delivered to Chairman Scott Fitzpatrick is available for the asking. The Commission had a few questions, mostly directed to procedural aspects, but Commissioner Taylor, representing the State's Department of Economic Development, asked a question as to whether our request to form a regional stakeholder group was consistent with the state's Ground Water Management Plan. (Ask Bruce and/or Brent to comment.) The Commission directed the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Conservation, Ground Water Resources Division (Tony Duplechin) to draft appropriate rules to set up the regional stakeholder bodies. The rules are being drafted now. (Ask Tony if he'd like to give an update.) The Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, August 23, 2004, and we plan to give a report of tonight's meeting to the Commission at that time.

Now, Dr. Duex will discuss CASH vision.